

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02 ACDA-05 NSAE-00

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INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USDEL CSCE GENEVA

S E C R E T ROME 5692

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PARM, MARR, NATO, IT, SP

SUBJECT: NATO PROBLEMS PAR 1 - AS VIEWED BY THE ITALIAN
FOREIGN MINISTRY

SUMMARY: ON APRIL 15, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE BERGOLD
CALLED ON ERIC DARIN, THE MFA'S COORDINATOR FOR NATO AND DIS-
ARMAMENT AFFAIRS. THE CONVERSATION CENTERED ON THE PROBLEMS
FACING THE ALLIANCE ON THE SOUTHERN FLANK, WITH STRESS ON SPAIN
AND GREECE. END SUMMARY.

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1. AFTER NORAL EXAHANGE OF PLEASANTRIES PRINCIPALLY REGARDING DARIN'S TRIP TO WASHINGTON IN JANUARY, DARIN ASKED BERGOLD A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS PRESENTATION TO THE NAC ON THE SPANISH NEGOTIATIONS. DARIN WAS VERY INTERESTED IN WHAT SEEMED FOR HIM A NEW INSISTANCE ON THE PART OF THE SPANISH FOR AN EXPLICIT POLITICAL LINK WITH NATO. HE SEEMED VERY INTERESTED IN DETERMINING HOW MUCH OF THE EXCHANGE WAS AT SPANISH INITIATIVE AND HOW MUCH AT U.S. HE ALSO WOUNDERED HOW THE PORTUGUESE LEFTWARD DRIFT WAS IMPACTING ON SPANISH PERCEPTIONS.

2. BERGOLD MENTIONED THAT GERMAN FONMIN GENSCHER, WHILE IN MADRID JUST PRIOR TO RECENT ROUND OF US-SPANISH NEGOTIATIONS, HAD RECEIVED INDICATIONS REGARDING SPAIN'S DESIRE FOR CLOSER NATO LINKS VERY SIMILAR TO THOSE EXPRESSED BY THE SPANISH DURING NEGOTIATIONS. DARIN WAS SOMEWHAT SURPRISED SINCE HE STATED THAT WHEN MFA POLITICAL DIRECTOR DUCCI WAS IN MADRID LESS THAN THREE WEEKS AGO, THE SPANIARDS HAD ONLY RAISED THE NATO QUESTION PERIPHERALLY AND WITH GREAT DELICACY. HE OFFERED CONCLUSION THAT IT WAS UNDERSTANDABLE, HOWEVER, THAT SPANIARDS MIGHT FEEL THEY COULD BE MORE OPEN WITH THE GERMANS AND THE U.S.

3. IN RESPONSE TO YET ANOTHER QUESTION ABOUT MOTIVATION FOR SPANISH DESIRE NATO ASSOCIATION, BERGOLD EXPLAINED THAT INITIALLY THEY DESIRED A FORMAL BILATERAL SECURITY AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED STATES. WHEN THE SPANIARDS REALIZED THIS WAS NOT ON, THEY BEGAN TO STRESS THE NATO RELATIONSHIP. THEY, AFTER ALL, FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT THE U.S. FACILITIES IN SPAIN PLAY A KEY ROLE IN DEFENDING NOT ONLY SPAIN BUT ALL OF NATO EUROPE. THEY ARE TIRED OF BEING TREATED AS THE PARIAS OF EUROPE AND SEEM INSISTENT UPON RECEIVING SOME FORM OF ECPLICIT RECOGNITION FROM NATO FOR THE SECURITY CONTRIBUTION THEY PROVIDE TO ALL OF WESTERN EUROPE.

4. DARIN STATED THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY FAVORED INCREASED MILITARY CONNECTIONS BETWEEN SPAIN AND THE NATO COUNTRIES. HE IMPLIED IT WOULD BE POLITICALLY ADVANTAGEOUS IF SUCH CONTACTS COULD BE ON A BILATERAL BASIS (OR THROUGH CINCEUR) AND INVOLVE SUCH THINGS A JOINT EXERCISES AND PLANNING STAFFS. HE WAS VERY DOUBTFUL THAT THE SCANDINAVIANS WOULD EVER AGREE TO INCLUDING FRANCO SPAIN IN NATO AND HE WAS EQUALLY DOUBTFUL THAT ITALIAN

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POLITICIANS WOULD BE ABLE TO ACCEPTDOMESTIC POLITICAL RISKS INVOLVED IN SUPPORTING SPAIN'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE ALLIANCE BEFORE FRANCO DIES. GE EXPLAINED THAT WHILE THE RECENT LEFTWARD SLIDE IN PORTUGAL HAS BUCKED UP THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND PUT THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE ON ICE, IT HAS PARADOICALLY STRENGTHENED THE HAND OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY. THE SOCIALISTS NOW HOLD THE POLITICAL BALANCE IN THE EQUATION. THEY ARE MORE IDEOLOGICALLY AND HISTORICALLY OPPOSED TO FRANCO'S SPAIN THAN ANY OF THE

OTHER COALITION PARTIES IN ITALY.

5. IN THIS VEIN, DARIN MENTIONED THAT THE ITALIAN NAVAL CHIEF OF STAFF, ADMIRAL DI GIORGI, HAD BEEN INVITED TO MAKE AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO SPAIN AND HAS REQUESTED THE MFA'S OPINION. WHILE DARIN FAVORED THE VISIT IN PRINCIPLE, HE FELT IT SHOULD BE DELAYED UNTIL AFTER THE JUNE 15 ITALIAN REGIONAL ELECTIONS.

6. DARIN THEN COMMENTED THAT WHILE THE GENERAL ALLIANCE PICTURE, ESPECIALLY ON THE SOUTHERN FLANK, WAS RATHER GRIM, HE FELT THERE WERE A FEW BRIGHT SPOTS THAT SHOULD BE NOTED. ONE OF THESE WAS THE FACT THE THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT HAD RECENTLY PASSED THE ITALIAN NAVY LAW WHICH WILL INVEST SIGNIFICANT SUMS OF MONEY OVER THE NEXT TEN YEARS AND INSURE THE CONTINUING ROLE OF THE ITALIAN NAVY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

7. THE REMAINING POSITIVE ITEMS INVOLVE APPARENT FRENCH APPROACHES TO NATO AND ACTIONS AIMED AT STRENGTHENING THE WESTERN MILITARY POSITION. FIRST, THE FRENCH HAVE INDICATED THAT THEY WILL TRANSFER A MAJOR SECTION OF THEIR NAVY, INCLUDING TWO CARRIERS, FROM THE ATLANTIC INTO THE MEDITERRANEAN. SECOND, IT IS RUMORED THAT THE FRENCH AND THE FRG HAVE REACHED AN AGREEMENT THROUGH WHICH FRENCH TACTICAL PLUTON MISSILES CAN BE TARGETED ON MILITARY OBJECTIVES FROM GERMAN SOIL, WHILE IN EXCHANGE FOR THIS, THE GERMANS WILL BE ALLOWED TO ESTABLISH AND MAN LOGISTICAL OPERATIONS ON FRENCH SOIL. BERGOLD NOTED THAT HE, TOO, HAD HEARD OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS AND FOUND THEM HOPEFUL.

8. DARIN THEN CAUTIONED THAT WHILE HE, TOO, WAS HOPEFUL CONCERNING THESE DEVELOPMENTS, HE HAD BEEN DISAPPOINTED IN THE PAST WHEN THE FRENCH HAD MADE SIGN OF A READINESS FOR CLOSER AND MORE HOPEFUL COOPERATION AND SO BE HOW TOOK THESE INDICATIONS WITH CAUTION. DARIN SAID THAT HE WOULD BE TEMPORARILY OUT
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OF ROME, STARTING APRIL 16, TO CHAIR A SALT GROUP MEETING. HE ASKED WHETHER BERGOLF WAS FAMILIAR WITH THIS FORUM THAT DID NOT INCLUDE THE UNITED STATES AND WHETHER THE U.S. HAD ANY OBJECTIONS TO THIS TYPE OF EUROPEAN MEETING. BERGOLD SAID THE U.S. UNDERSTOOD THE REASONS FOR THE GROUP AND FOLLOWED ITS DELIBERATION. DARIN THEN ADDED THAT THE EUROPEAN HAVE TRIES WITHOUT SUCCESS TO CONVINCE THE FRENCH TO TAKE PART BUT THAT THE FRENCH FEAR THAT SUCH PARTICIPATION WOULD BE THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS THEIR BEING INCLUDED IN STRATEGIC LIMITATIONS AGREEMENTS.

9. DARIN THEN INQUIRED ABOUT COURSE OF US-GREEK NEGOTIATIONS. HE DISPLAYED SOME PUZZLEMENT CONCERNING U.S. DESIRE TO GET GREEK-NATO DISCUSSION UNDERWAY. BERGOLD THEN EXPLAINED THE THREE-DIMENSIONAL CHESS GAME NATURE OF THE GREEK-U.S., GREEK-NATO AND GREEK-TURKISH NEGOTIATIONS. HE STRESSED U.S. BELIEFE THAT WHETHER

THE GREEKS LIKED IT OR NOT, THERE WERE OBJECTIVE NATO FACTORS
WHICH HAD TO BE FACED FOR THE GREEK-US NEGOTIATIONS TO BE CONCLUDED
AND THAT U.S. BELIEVED IT WOULD BE FAR BETTER FOR THE NATO
ALLIES TO FORM AND GUIDE THESE ISSUES WHILE THERE WAS STILL
TIME RATHER THAN JUST LET THE SITUATION EVOLVE TO THE POINT OF
THE GREEKS BEING FACED WITH TOUGH DECISIONS WITH NO TIME TO
PONDER. DARIN SEEMED CONVINCED BY THE ARGUMENT.BEAUDRY

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